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DAN PATTERSON SPECIAL EDITION

FEBRUARY 24, 2020 · SPECIAL EDITION

Send Dan well wishes at:
#farewelldan

BIG FINISH

Dr. Dan, Niagara College's biggest cheerleader and longest-serving president, has finished his work here. And what a job he's done!

Dan Patterson

Dan leaves student legacy with bursaries, scholarships

By WENDY DUECK

To help celebrate Dan's extraordinary 25-year career, the college is launching something special. The Dan Patterson Legacy Campaign is a new endowment fund to support students.

BURSARIES – to help make education more accessible for those struggling financially to cover tuition and other related costs. The legacy fund will lessen financial barriers to education and give more students the ability to stay in school and graduate.

SCHOLARSHIPS – to continue to attract academically-gifted students to our programs and support the increasing demand for a highly–skilled workforce in Niagara. The legacy fund will increase the number of entrance scholarships, giving an even greater number of students the opportunity to excel with a NC applied learning experience and build successful careers here at home.

BE WORLD READY TRAVEL BURSARIES — to enable more students to participate in semester exchanges, summer institutes and international field studies. Currently Niagara College offers one scholarship or bursary for every 10 students. The legacy fund allow even more students to take advantage of this valuable experience.

To make your donation to The Dan Patterson Legacy Fund, please visit: https://donate.niagaracollege.ca/ways-to-give/ or call 905-641-2252 ext. 7775.

Wendy Dueck is the college's Director of Development & Alumni Relations

From humble beginnings to among best in Canada

By SUSAN PEDLER

When Dan Patterson started as Niagara College's president in 1995, the school's future was uncertain. There was just one small campus and a handful of programs.

Skip ahead 25 years and it's hard to deny the college's transformation under Patterson's leadership. There's a campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake. There are dozens and dozens of new specialty programs. And there's a new approach that focuses on being experiential, entrepreneurial, transformative and innovative.

Enrolment has almost tripled – from 4,500 to 13,000 students who come from more than 90 countries. The college has invested more than $300 million at two outstanding campus locations that are now among the most unique, innovative and beautiful learning environments in the country. Along with its presence in Niagara, the College is also a recognized leader in international education with global partnerships.

Under Patterson's helm, the college easily holds its own against schools like Sheridan, Mohawk and Humber.

"Who would have thought, 25 years later, that we would have become the institution we've become?" Patterson says. "It has been an extraordinary journey."

In the following pages, you'll read tributes by those who've worked closely with Dan Patterson. They talk about his drive to ensure Niagara College is responsive to the needs of students and the Niagara community.

Susan Pedler is a professor in the Journalism program.

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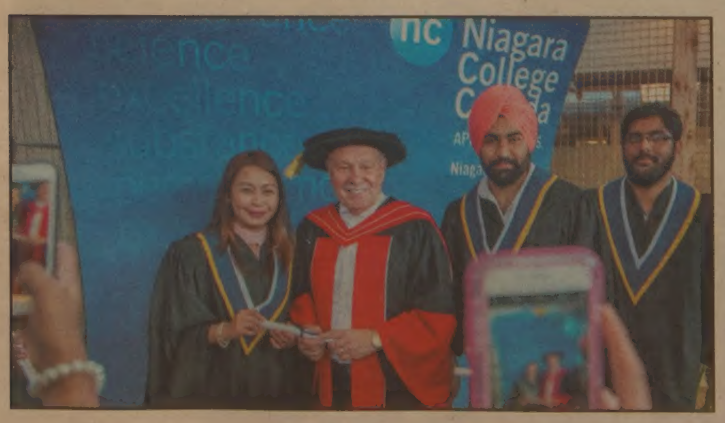

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SPECIAL EDITION

NC'S FIRST LADY

Whether at the podium, attending groundbreaking ceremonies or accompanying Dan on trips, ***Saundra Patterson*** *has been an integral part of Niagara College life*

SPECIAL EDITION

ALWAYS 'ALL IN'

The 'purest extrovert,' Dan spent 25 years enthusiastically and inexhaustibly supporting Niagara College and its students. ***By Sean Kennedy***

Dan Patterson acknowledges applause after new president Sean Kennedy thanks him for his contributions to Niagara College on Jan. 10.
PHOTO BY THERESA REDULA

As I reflect on our almost 14 years of working together, what strikes me most about Dan is that — to borrow a poker phrase — he's "all in," pretty much all of the time.

His boundless energy and enthusiasm are legendary, ever a sight to behold, and are traits at which I have marvelled frequently, within the College, across Niagara and around the world.

Dan is driven by people and relationships, the purest extrovert I have ever worked with; his energy grows in lockstep with the duration of an event and the number of people with whom he talks, shakes hands or hugs. He feeds off the energy of other people, who in turn are charmed, inspired and engaged by his infectious smile and warmth.

My different vice-presidential roles at NC have given me many chances to see Dan soaring in full people-engagement flight. In my early years at Niagara College, as a newly minted vice-president of external relations, and someone new to the Niagara region, I remember attending numerous community breakfasts and luncheons with Dan where he tried to introduce me to a whole room full of people - all at the same time.

In fact, after many years of watching Dan try to personally connect with all 600 guests at Niagara College's annual signature fundraiser for student scholarships and bursaries, I have come to realize that Dan often prioritizes meeting people over eating! Our Seafood Gala is an event that consistently has amazing food, and lots of it; I am quite sure Dan has gone home hungry every year, yet satiated by the hundreds of conversations he's had, and the thousands of dollars raised to support NC students.

Dan participating in goat yoga at the Welland Campus.
SUBMITTED PHOTO

At least as important to Dan as community relationships is the chance to connect internally with students, faculty and staff. Despite an ever-busy schedule, one of Dan's most remarkable traits has been his desire to accept every invitation to a class or student event, every time. It didn't always work out, and frequently made him late, but inevitably Dan would come flying into an event and enliven it with his beaming smile and unbridled enthusiasm. From student orientation events, to Diwali festivals, to convocations, a cornerstone of Dan's legacy as president will be his unwavering commitment to be present for as many student events as possible.

A story I will always remember and one that epitomizes Dan's enthusiastic leadership style occurred this past Fall. I was meeting with Dan in his office when he suddenly looked at his watch and jumped up, saying, "we have to go over to the Wine Visitor Education Centre!" before charging out the door in his suit and tie. I followed, thinking we were going to be meeting a distinguished visitor; instead, we headed to the loading dock area, where the wine and viticulture students were engaged in traditional grape stomping.

Realizing that the president was there, one of the students asked Dan if he'd like to try. Not long after, Dan had taken off his dress shoes and socks, rolled up his pant legs, and was soon "all in" – up to his knees in a barrel of grapes, stomping up and down with great gusto and a huge smile. It was quintessential Dan; he may have ruined his suit, but he'd made everybody's day, and loved it.

Sean Kennedy worked with Dan for 14 years and will be the next president of Niagara College. He begins his new role on Feb. 24.

SPECIAL EDITION

STUDENT CHAMPION

He's trailblazing, passionate, welcoming. But what stands out most is Dan's connection to students and his engagement in every aspect of college life. **By Tom Price**

From right Aman Arora, Shane Malcolm, Tom Price, Dan Patterson, Ryan Huckla and Vineet Bhatia. Past and present members of NCSAC.
PHOTO BY JON BELGRAVE, NIAGARA COLLEGE

Dr. Dan Patterson is the epitome of the Niagara College DNA. As a student I was fortunate to have the amazing responsibility of being the Niagara College Board of Governors Student Representative. The Board of Governors during that year was focused on the development of the Niagara College DNA. The fibre that makes up the DNA are, Trailblazing, Passionate, and Welcoming. Dr. Dan Patterson himself is Trailblazing, Passionate and Welcoming.

I have had the opportunity to engage with Dan as a student, as a Niagara College Administrative Council (NCSAC) Director, as an internal Board of Governor, and NCSAC President and I have seen first-hand Dan's trailblazing student focused efforts. These academic efforts include the first of their kind programs such as Commercial Cannabis Production, The Teaching Winery, and Teaching Brewery to mention just a few. Dan's trailblazing, student-focused efforts have provided unparalleled experiential and applied learning opportunities through not only the seven on-campus learning enterprises, but through applied research opportunities at both the Welland and NOTL campuses. Dan's trailblazing is equally matched in his passion for students.

Dan's unwavering passion for students is evident and amplified in the programs, learning environments, and experiential learning Dan has championed for on their behalf. Dan's genuinely organic hallway conversations, his attendance at student-led events, and his nonstop messaging to anyone who will listen about the extraordinary accomplishments students achieve daily is a testament to Dan's undeniable passion. Dan's passion for students is no more evident than at convocation ceremonies. During Dan's tenure, Dan has participated in 170 convocation ceremonies, personally congratulated, and shaken the hands of seventy thousand students. As a recent graduate, I can attest to the excitement, joy, and pleasure Dan receives from convocation ceremonies. The abundant engagement Dan participates in is not only passionate, but welcoming as well.

During Dan's 25 year tenure, he has led a monumental transformation of Niagara College enrolment, campuses, and learning environments. Dan has shaped the character of Niagara College and created an unparalleled awareness that is recognized and welcomed worldwide. Dan has welcomed not only domestic students from the Niagara Region, but from across Canada. Dan has also welcomed 42 percent of the student population from over 90 countries world wide. The phrase "bringing the world to Niagara College," should read, "Dan Patterson welcoming the world to Niagara College."

As a student leader I look to Dan and his DNA as an inspiration in my leadership skills. I strive to provide trailblazing leadership on behalf of the student population. I engage students daily with a passion that is genuine and unquestionable. I welcome students to bond, participate, and relish their time at Niagara College. Dan is the epitome of the Niagara College DNA, and he has imparted not only myself, but the students, faculty, and administrators the Niagara College DNA.

Tom Price is president of NCSAC.

From orientation to graduation

BY ROB WALTERS

Many adjectives have been used to describe Dan Patterson: energized, tenacious, trailblazing. The one that I believe best describes Daniel J. Patterson is student-focused.

I can recall on numerous occasions speaking with Dan on an issue or an opportunity— whether morning, afternoon, evening or late night - he would stop and say, "how will this help students?"

Dan's drive is to find a way to create an opportunity or experience for a student. Some examples include:

- Introducing students at community events to business leaders in their areas of interest
- Finding opportunities for students to speak or guide tours when hosting community leaders and elected officials; and
- Advising students about scholarships and bursaries.

Dan also thrives on meeting with students. I can't tell you how many times we have been late for meetings because a student had stopped by his office to speak with Dan or stopped him in the hallway or parking lot. When walking with Dan, I always have to keep an eye on him or I would lose him as he veered off to head into a classroom or an office to say hello.

Dan always takes the time to encourage students he sees in the community whether it's in downtown St. Catharines, at the gas station or in local stores or restaurants. There are numerous stories of these conversations, which helped encourage students to successfully navigate through a personal challenge or just needed some encouraging words.

There are so many fond memories I have of Dan's interaction with students. Two of my favourites occurred at Queen's Park.

The first memory involved a group of culinary students who were at the provincial legislature to showcase their skills to the Premier and Members of Provincial Parliament.

As the students were setting up for the reception, Dan realized that the Lieutenant Governor's quarters were just down the hall. Suddenly, Dan is speaking to the Lieutenant Governor's staff and arranging for a meeting between Niagara College students and the Lieutenant Governor. A few minutes later, Dan is signalling for the students to come for a private meeting with the Lieutenant Governor. I am not sure who looked more surprised: our students or the other College presidents.

The second incident occurred a couple of years later. Everyone at the reception was waiting for Premier Wynne to arrive. Without realizing what I had done, I mentioned to Dan that he might want to wait for the Premier at the door. Dan was focused on introducing the Premier to our students and decided to go out in the hall, greet the Premier and escort her past the other College presidents and students towards the NC display. This way she could see first-hand what our students were showcasing.

From orientation to graduation and beyond, Dan is always striving to see how he can assist NC students in achieving their dreams. Dan Patterson – student-focused!

Rob Walters is senior advisor to the president.

Dan Patterson and Rob Walters. SUBMITTED PHOTO

SPECIAL EDITION

LUXEMBOURG...

His back still hurts when he hears that word. Dan skipped sleep and became a culinary superfan, cheering NC on to World Cup gold and silver. ***By Craig Youdale***

I sat alone in a pristine and beautiful airport awaiting the arrival of my President of over five years. He was making this trip to Europe, at my urging, to take part in one of Niagara College's most unique student adventure of his tenure. A group of Niagara College students was about to compete in the Culinary World Cup. The Luxembourg airport was modern and sleek, devoid of much noise and clutter, and almost seemed lifeless until our president came bounding through the arrival gate. A man completely exhausted from travel but suddenly energized with the anticipation of what was to come. We are in stunningly beautiful Luxembourg and about to put the NC button on the global stage against the best students on the planet. We all know Dan already thinks this highly of all his students but now he gets the chance to create some hard, undeniable proof, and you can see the killer instinct in his eyes.

Dan was full of energy while supporting Niagara College students competing in the Culinary World Cup in Luxembourg. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**

We chatted in the car heading back to our hotel bringing him up to speed on our adventure to date and the challenges we are about to face. He has no specific knowledge of what is about to come and cannot comprehend the stress that is in his future. He arrived at our hotel and was not interested in a hotel bed but instantly wanted to see the team. He exploded into our microscopic preparation kitchen, with 10 students looking very serious, with the glow and energy we all expect. The students are running on fumes already and their eyes light up with their new guest as the President of their college has made the journey to cheer them on, and the gratitude is palpable and real. I am pretty sure the shouting of "Live from Luxembourg" probably took a couple years off their lives.

That evening was the first eve of two days of competition and we would see the team hunched over worktables for thirty hours straight as it prepared its delicate table of food for the judges. There was not much Dan could do but be there for support, and that is what he did, and he was there for every, single, moment. I watched as he went from table to table quietly asking questions of our coaches, and myself, and looking just as freaked out as I was and starting to understand the pressure. It is now four in the morning of a twenty hour stretch and he was determined to be there for his students no matter the exhaustion and stress. As he stood in obvious need of sleep, he was asking questions of a Canadian chef, who was there to observe as well about what was the next step. Something stuck with me at that moment. Dan was not there for show, nor was he there to let everyone know a man of his age could go without sleep. Dan was there because as a leader he knew it was his job plain and simple and he understood the value of his presence. He was there representing 11,000 people who were seeing through his eyes the commitment of these young Canadians. He was there because he understood the sacrifice of others and wanted to share in their journey.

Many times, in each of our lives, we come across someone that gives us pause, allows us to aspire, and shows us a different way to look at life. In my case I have been lucky to have many people that inspire me and drive me to do better and achieve more whether in my career or in my personal life. That characteristic in others that allows us to see the world differently is most likely not a learned response or even something you can teach, but what it really comes down to is a spark inside their soul that cannot be explained.

Dan stayed up through the night, and morning, and throughout the entire week, seeing his team achieve a World Cup Gold and Silver Medal for their efforts. As happy and full of joy the entire team was at that moment, nothing could hide the glow of the smile that beamed from our President and I am pretty sure you could see it from space.

Craig Youdale is the dean of the Canadian Food and Wine Institute.

WINE AND DINE: At Niagra College functions, there's sure to be great food and wine

MASTER BUILDER

Over the past 25 years, Dan has nurtured the astoundting growth of Niagara College: both in bricks and mortar — and as importantly — in reputation. The Welland campus literallly changed the local landscape with the addition of the Rankin Technology Centre, the Athletic Centre, the Walker Advanced Manufacturing Innovation Centre, a new cafeteria. And the list goes on.

Then there was the sparkling new campus in NOTL, that will bear Dan's name. There, Niagara earned an international reputation with the Canadian Food and Wine Institute. As the campuses grew and student populations ballooned, Niagara led all Ontario colleges in student satisfaction surveys. And just last year, Niagara topped the national college rankings for innovation and research. And the list goes on.

SPECIAL EDITION

LIVE FROM . . .

As the face of Niagara College, Dan was always ready for his TV closeup and a chance to brag about all things NC. ***By Dutch VandenBerg***

Dan Patterson with the CBC's Rick Mercer, who brought The Mercer Report to NOTL to feature the Brewmaster programs. **SUBMITTED PHOTO**

As Dan will say at any event we see each other at – "Live from...it's Dutch"

I've always admired his ability to relate to each faculty, staff or student that he interacts with. Many of you reading can identify with this. Dan is all things Niagara College, the ambassador, the champion and as many of us agree – our NC DNA. Something you may not be aware of is the privilege or task of editing DAN!

As we all know Dan can be eloquent and extremely passionate when talking about NC. When it comes to TV, we need concise, we need edit points and we need sentences with pause or bite-size bits. Thinking back to the first interview I participated in years ago, after about 15 minutes I asked, "does he breathe?"

Dan wants to give you everything, hit all the points. Sometimes we only need to ask one question and we will get all the answers that we need for that interview. Our broadcasting students have always appreciated the time he spends with them. He always makes a point of being available, taking time and of course, having to say and spell his name for every interview (TV reporter thing) thousands of times. Every time without missing a beat, he happily obliges.

One of my fondest Dan memories is from 2013, sitting in Dan's living room recording some audio for a project for the upcoming Seafood Gala that year. In between takes we were chatting and Dan asks if I saw the final piece from the Rick Mercer Report they did on the Brewery program. Of course I said yes, it was great. Dan replies with, "it was so hard, Rick talks so fast - they edited me down to almost nothing Dutch". Without thinking I blurted out, "wow I admire that editor, that's a daunting task for sure. I should ask them for a few tips." There was a pause, and then Dan says, "I can't help it, I get so excited and proud of all things NC, I had more to say."

Never change Dan, never change.

Dutch VandenBerg is a co-ordinator in the BRTF program in the School of Media.

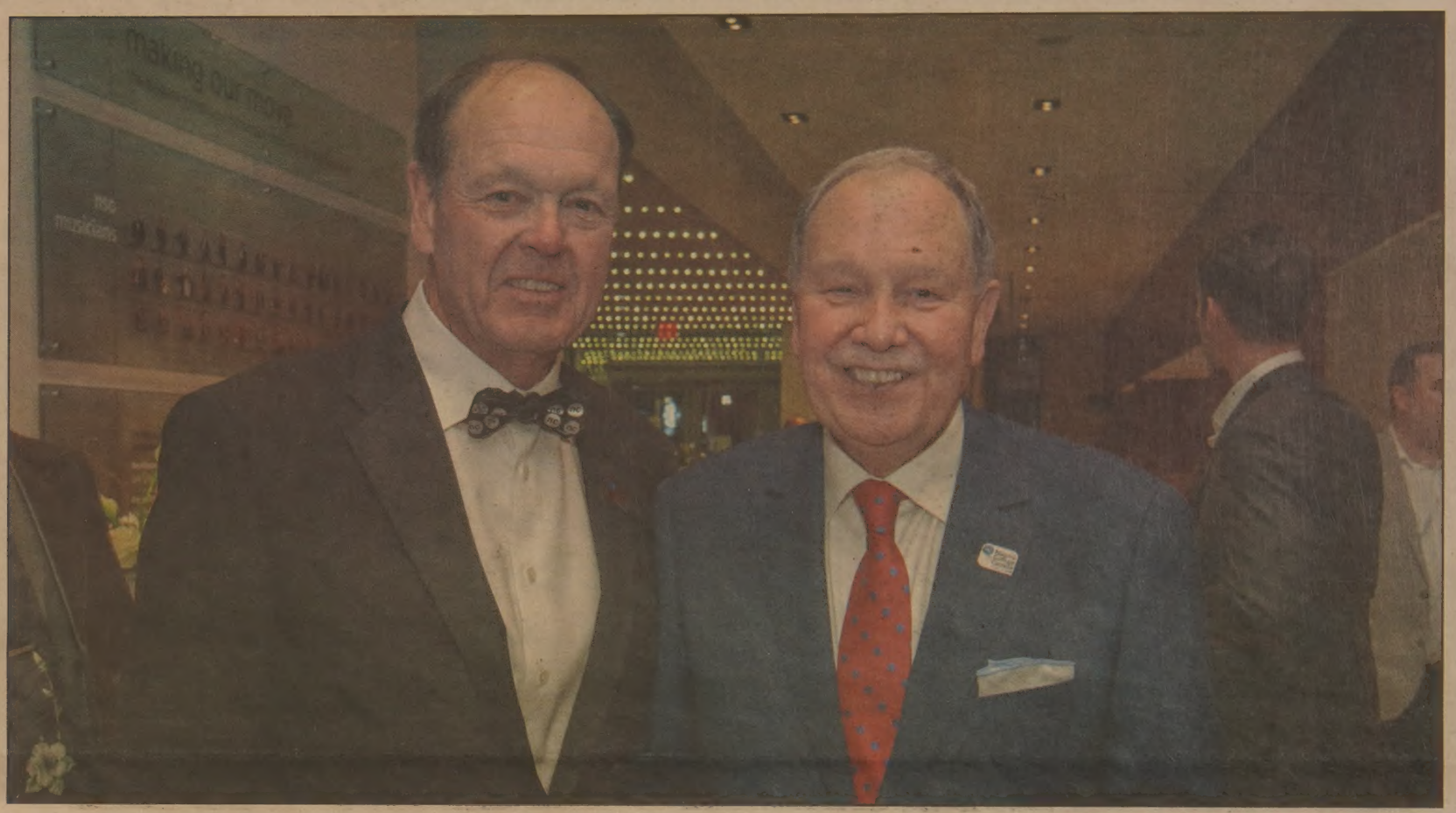
Dan presents Dutch VandenBerg with the award for the Educator of the Year.

Dan has likely eaten a mountain of shrimp since the start of the college's biggest annual fundraising event, the Seafood Gala. This one was at Victoria Park Restaurant in Niagara Falls.

SPECIAL EDITION

DRIVE AND DISCIPLINE

A truly committed leader, Dan has ensured NC's culture and reputation will hold true. ***By John F.T. Scott***



Dan alongside John F.T. Scott, the chairman of Niagara College's Board of Governors. SUBMITTED PHOTO

There are many characteristics of leadership that can be attributed to Dan Patterson. I think the most profound is his exceptional, unwavering discipline which was the foundation for his diligence in championing Niagara College, and most importantly its students in virtually every facet of college life. When new ventures were proposed in the region, he actively sought opportunity for a role for the College community.

I first met Dan when, in its fledgling years, I chaired the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre, he was in attendance for every announcement or event as we unveiled the promise of that exciting concept, his consequent offer of a beneficial partnership in appropriate horticultural research spawned trusted initiatives which continue. I later learned that Dan was also observing my conduct as a board member. You see, the Niagara College Board of Governors often has vacancies, and Dan was always in search of prospective candidates.

His discipline to that concept ensured that no person was ever proposed that he hadn't seen in action and has resulted in a succession of strong, cohesive boards that have ensured consistency in the evolutionary growth of Niagara College.

Dan always ensured that he had time for every student. He has an authentic interest in the welfare and aspirations of each person engaged in higher education. That's why he always took time to stop and speak with students regardless of the occasion in which he was involved.

In December Dan and I were having an intense discussion over lunch at a private club when the dining room supervisor introduced herself as a Niagara College co-op student. Dan immediately stood up and engaged this person in an animated conversation.

It was vintage Dan for regardless of the importance of our discussion that student came first!

When Dan assumed leadership of the College in 1995, it was clear to him that, in order to fulfill his passion to ensure the very best opportunities for students, modern facilities were required.

He recognized that Niagara College needed not just new buildings, but it was also necessary to offer programming unique to the requirements of the industry of the region. He set out to build the beautiful new campus in Niagara-on-the-Lake that now bears his name and boasts facilities designed to capitalize on employment in many leading-edge sectors. He also ensured the modernization of the Welland campus and the development of new facilities to enable research and innovation.

Perhaps Dan's most important legacy to the College is in the strength of the management team that he attracted and mentored, this group has continued to provide the leadership necessary to grow and develop the college and its concepts. A testament to the universal recognition by the national college community of that reality is the repeated question we were asked when recruiting his successor "Is this really an open competition because your senior leaders are so strong?"

Well, it certainly was intense and very open, but our internal candidates were indeed exceptionally strong.

I wish more people could have witnessed Dan's enthusiastic reaction at being told that a person who he had mentored would succeed him at Niagara College! That in itself was a remarkable testament to Dan Patterson.

Niagara College has benefited from the great fortune of having a truly disciplined leader. His dedicated tenure has ensured its culture, reputation, and areas of focus will hold a proud and vital position in the Niagara Region, an exceptional contribution from a great career.

John F.T. Scott is the chairman of Niagara College's Board of Governors

Dan's enthusiastic work ethic meant he didn't mind getting his hands — or feet— a little dirty at NC events, like the annual grape stomp.SUBMITTED PHOTO

SPECIAL EDITION

DAN-SPLAINING

Master plans, educational philosophy, robot rovers for vineyards or dealing with the media: Whatever needed explaining to the outside world, Dan was up to the task

DAN-ISMS: A PARTIAL LIST

"LIVE from beautiful Welland (or NOTL), Ontario."

•

"The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain!"
Dan says this when he is about to do an interview or test a microphone.

•

"We want to make sure we get it right."

•

"Not the end of the world."
You know that Dan is asking/encouraging you to try again.

•

"Hey, how are ya?!"

•

"I can't thank you enough."

•

"You did an amazing job."

•

"How can we make the place better?"

•

"Wouldn't it be cool if..."

•

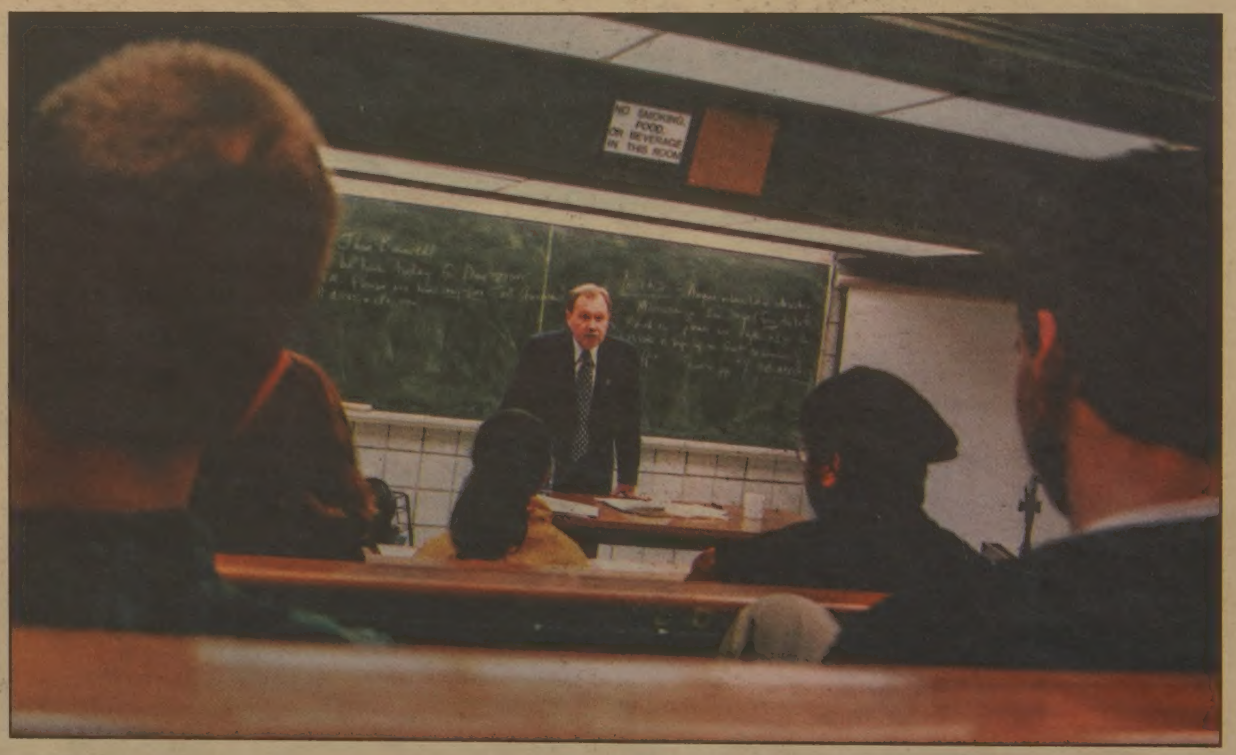
"I want to hear your joys and frustrations."

•

"What a place! We have such incredible faculty and staff."

•

"From soup to nuts."



Historic moment for college

■ NIAGARA INVESTING $40 MILLION INTO THE EXPANSION OF ITS WOODLAWN ROAD CAMPUS

Niagara College president Dan Patterson discusses the planned $80-million renovation of its Welland and Niagara-on-the-Lake campuses with The Tribune's editorial board yesterday. The bulk of the investment, $42-million, will be spent in Welland.

SPECIAL EDITION

HAVE YOU SEEN OUR...

Politicians of every stripe, celebrities and even the occasional Royal got Dan's personal take on the special things happening at Niagara College

His Royal Highness Charles, the Prince of Wales, visits the Wine Visitor + Education Centre at Niagara College on Nov. 5, 2009.

Dan Patterson also welcomed to Niagara College former Premier of Ontario Kathleen Wynne on May 29, 2014 (top left), former Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper on Oct. 10, 2009 (bottom left) and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Aug. 26, 2017 (bottom right).

SPECIAL EDITION

GODSPEED, DAN

The philosopher Albert Schweitzer
captured the importance
of acknowledging those who have helped
us to pursue and achieve our dreams,
when he said:
"At times our light goes out and it is rekindled
by the spark of another person. It is cause
to think with deep gratitude of those
who have lit the flame within us."

Dan Patterson, Commencement, 2019